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SUBJECT: SOLANA DISCUSSES OSCE, ENERGY, AND IRAN WITH SOLANA

11. (SBU) Summary: European Union High Representative for External Policy and Security Javier Solana met with President Nazarbayev in Astana on October 10. Solana asked Nazarbayev to consider the option of chairing the OSCE after 2009. Nazarbayev told Solana that proposed amendments to the law on sub-soil are not aimed at Western energy companies and offered to speak to Iran about its nuclear program.

12. (SBU) On October 10, European Union High Representative for External Policy and Security Javier Solana traveled to Astana for meetings with President Nazarbayev, Prime Minister Karim Masimov, and Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin. Spanish Ambassador to Kazakhstan Chamarro and British DCM Mike Welch provided separate briefings to DCM on the visit. Both reported that Solana asked Nazarbayev to consider pushing back Kazakhstan's bid to chair the OSCE because no consensus exists on 2009. According to Welch, Nazarbayev did not respond. Chamarro told DCM, however, that Nazarbayev indicated that he would like to be flexible, but that the CIS endorsement of Kazakhstan's bid has limited his ability to compromise. Solana told Nazarbayev that the EU expects further democratic reform in Kazakhstan, highlighting the need for better media and electoral laws, enhanced freedom of assembly guarantees, and more effective avenues for the opposition to engage with the public.

13. (SBU) Nazarbayev told Solana that Kazakhstan is ready to contribute more to Afghanistan's reconstruction, but cannot provide troops. Nazarbayev expressed his willingness to speak to Iran about its nuclear ambitions. Kazakhstan aims to become the world's largest exporter of uranium, said Nazarbayev, but will not export to Iran until it fully meets its IAEA obligations. The two discussed the EU - Central Asia strategy, with Nazarbayev questioning whether the plan will lead to concrete action.

14. (SBU) Nazarbayev assured Solana that proposed amendments to Kazakhstan's law on sub-soil use are not aimed at Western companies. He also claimed that the amendments do not apply retroactively. (Note: He is incorrect.) On Kashagan, Nazarbayev told Solana that Kazakhstan will not take radical action and seeks to reach a deal within the framework of the existing production sharing agreement.
Ordway